(b) whether CDs related to the said subject have been distributed in Tamil Nadu in large numbers;

(c) whether the said fact was taken in consideration while taking decision regarding implementation of Sethusamudram project; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI TR. BAALU): (a) and (b) Simulation studies of the Tsunami of 2004 have been conducted by the Ministry of Earth Sciences. That Ministry has expressed the opinion that Adam's Bridge has no bearing on the safety of the coast from a Tsunami because of the fact that the southern coast of Tamil Nadu falls under the shadow region of Sri Lanka. No instance of distribution of CDs on the studies amongst the public has come to notice.

(c) and (d) Decision on implementation of the Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project was taken by the Government after taking into consideration all relevant factors.

Proposals for expressways and highways in Punjab

501. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several proposals for expressways and highways in the State of Punjab are pending with Government for clearance;

(b) if so, the details of such proposals pending with Government; and

(c) the details of Government plans to improve the condition of roads in various parts of Punjab during the next two years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) This Ministry is responsible for development and maintenance of National Highways in the country. Ministry plans to improve the condition of roads under National Highways Development Project (NHDP) and National Highways (Original) works. Four laning of about 234 km. National Highways at a cost of Rs. 1564 crore (Approximate) is taken up under NHDP Phase II and III. Detailed Project Reports for 4 laning of about 212 km. National Highways are under preparation under NHDP Phase III. The works of about 14 km. four laning, 16 km. widening to two lane, 81 km. strengthening, 16 km. improvement of riding quality, 130 km. paved shoulders, construction of three bridges, road safety and other miscellaneous works to the tune of Rs. 200 crore have been included under National Highways (Original works) in the Annual Plan 2007-08. The Annual Plan 2008-09 is yet to be finalised.

Widening of NH-24

502. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to widen National Highway-24 in view of increasing traffic;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. National Highway No. 24